

Ministry of Oil and  
Environment



وزارة النفط والبيئة

## Kingdom of Bahrain written submissions on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

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### I. Substantive elements

#### 1. Objective(s)

a) What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?

##### Proposed Objective:

The main objective of the instrument shall be protecting the human health and the environment from plastic pollution while recognizing the importance of plastics for sustainable development

##### Explanatory Text:

Plastic is one of the most useful materials in the modern world. We use it in our daily life in variety of applications such as packaging, building and construction, textiles, transportations, electrical and electronics, medicine and agriculture. In fact, it is not a hazardous material if it is designed, produced, and consumed in a sustainable way and managed properly when it becomes waste. However, the unsustainable design of plastic products, using hazardous chemical additives in plastic products and the mismanagement of plastic waste have created a lot of environmental problems. The treaty should focus on finding the solutions that will solve the issue of plastic pollution through sustainable design and production of plastic products and shifting from linearity model to circularity model.

#### 2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

- a) *What core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches would provide a comprehensive approach to addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, throughout the full life cycle in line with the future objective(s) of the instrument?*

#### **Core Obligations**

- Promote sustainable design and production of plastic products
- Improve the plastic waste collection and segregation at municipal level.
- Shifting to circularity approach that consider waste as another form of a resource that contribute to the economy.
- Build capacity to understand, assess, and address the socio-economic impacts of the implementation of response measures.

#### **Control Measures**

- Improve the design of plastic products such that all plastic products produced are totally recyclable.
- Phase out certain hazardous chemical additives used in producing plastic.
- Build robust system and infrastructure for collection and proper sorting of plastic waste.
- Specify minimum recycled content required in producing new plastic products which will help to strengthen the market demand for recycled plastics and hence increase collection, sorting and recycling of plastic waste.

## **II. Implementation elements**

### **1. Implementation measures**

- a) *How to ensure implementation of the instrument at the national level (eg. role national action plans contribute to meeting the objectives and obligations of the instrument?)*
- b) *How to ensure effectiveness of the instrument and have efficient national reporting?*
- c) *Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here on implementation measures (for example for scientific and technical cooperation and coordination as well as compliance).*

#### **National Action Plan**

Drawing up national action plan is very important to ensure the implementation of the instrument at the national level while taking in account the different national circumstances and respective capabilities on a bottom-up approach for each country party. The national action plan may include:

- National Strategic Objectives
- Plastic Recycling targets
- Actions to improve plastic waste collection and recycling
- Strategies to reduce plastic pollution in marine environment, especially for small island developing states (SIDSs).

The parties shall provide schedule for the implementation of the national action plan

### **Efficient National Reporting**

To track the progress of the implementation of the national action plan and to ensure the effectiveness of the instrument, the national reporting provisions must be included in the treaty without standardization and harmonization. The national reporting will give an indicator of which parties having difficulties so that assistance could be provided to strength their compliance capacity.

### **Other Relevant Proposals or Priorities (Technical Cooperation and Coordination)**

One of the main challenges that we are facing today to tackle plastic pollution is that scientific and technical information related to plastic pollution is still limited (e.g., microplastics, plastic product design, toxic additives, advanced recycling technologies for different types of plastics.). The treaty shall include provisions on science & research and technology transfer to find solutions for the issue of plastic pollution.

## **2. Means of Implementation**

With respect to means of implementation, document UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 covers the following elements: capacity-building, technical assistance, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and financial assistance.

*a) What measures will be required to support the implementation of the instrument?*

To ensure the implementation of the instrument effectively by parties especially the developing countries and small island developing states, it is important to provide adequate financial and technical assistance, capacity-building, and technology transfer from developed country parties to developing country parties, especially those countries most needed to enable them to tackle plastic pollution. This is very critical for developing country parties to fulfill their obligations and to build robust infrastructure and system for collection and recycling of plastic waste which will ultimately promote the circularity approaches.

### III. Additional input

Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here (for example introductory elements; awareness-raising, education and exchange of information; research; stakeholder engagement; institutional arrangements and final provisions).

#### **Awareness-Raising**

The role of raising awareness, training and education shall not be underestimated when it comes to tackling plastic pollution. to meet the objectives of the treaty. In fact, they play a huge role in combating the environmental pollution crisis through changing the consumers behaviours. Each party shall, within its capabilities provide the following information to the public:

- Health, environmental and socio-economic consequences of plastic pollution.
- The importance of sorting, reusability, and recyclability of plastic to tackle the plastic pollution.

#### **Other Priorities**

- It is very important to understand the need to focus on the efforts that will help to solve the issue of plastic pollution and not to narrow the discussion to banning or restricting any kind of plastic products.
- It is imperative for the parties to exchange information between them especially the information related to best practices in plastic waste collection and recycling as well as the recent research on plastic products design and advanced recycling technologies.